

RUSSIA: MICHELLE KWAN CONNECTS WITH YOUNG AUDIENCES



Michelle is greeted by students at English Language Summer Camp, June 16, 2007. [Aleksandra Konyseva, U.S. Embassy Moscow]

Michelle Kwan, Olympic Figure Skater and the first American Public Diplomacy Envoy, took her sports diplomacy tour to Russia in June 2007, visiting Moscow, Volgograd, and Elista. In Elista, Russian teenagers came to see Ms. Kwan at the first English Language Summer Camp, a project of the State Department's Bureau of the Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. In Volgograd and Moscow, she talked about the role athletes have played through the ups and downs of U.S.- Russian relations.

SLOVENIA: RAISING FUNDS TO HELP CHILDREN

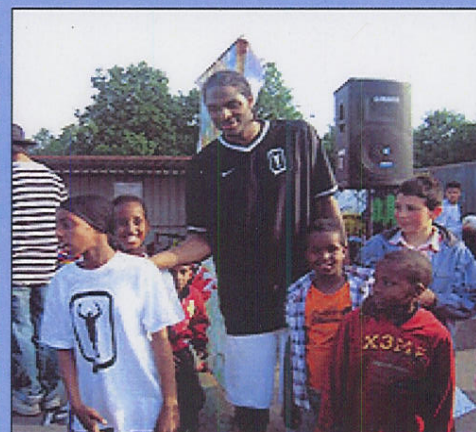


U.S. Embassy Ljubljana Cycling team, May 26, 2007. [Robert Post, U.S. Embassy Ljubljana]

The U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana co-sponsored the charity ride, "Biking for Life," on May 26, to help the Children's Surgical Ward of the Ljubljana Clinical Center. A U.S. Embassy team was among the nearly 200 cyclists who raised funds for the children's hospital unit.

DENMARK: HIP-HOP AND BASKETBALL A WINNING COMBINATION

What levels the playing field more than sports? The U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen joined forces with a Danish non-governmental organization (GAM3) that dedicates itself to integrating immigrant youths, predominantly Muslims, into the main stream of society or into Danish club basketball through participation in organized team sports in inner-city neighborhoods. The U.S. Embassy brought over NBA and WNBA stars Jamal Sampson (Denver Nuggets) and Andrea Stinson (Charlotte Sting), as well as Hip Hop dancers Isaac Barron and Rose Bichon, to join GAM3, by reaching out to immigrant neighborhoods in Denmark's three largest cities, June 4-8. The NBA and WNBA presence has helped GAM3 increase participation by 35% to more than 4,000 young people, 70% of them from immigrant families. The integration impact is clear: 13% of all young players in Danish club basketball got their start with GAM3.



Jamal Sampson of the Denver Nuggets makes a big impression with Danish immigrant children, June 4-8, 2007. [Tom Leary, U.S. Embassy Copenhagen]

VIENNA: UNDER SECRETARY HUGHES - BRIDGING GAPS BETWEEN RELIGIONS

Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes stressed the importance of individual action in reaching out to other religions during dialogue with Muslims, Jews, and Christians at a Vienna mosque on June 14. The conference, "Common Values Within Three World Religions: Christianity, Islam and Judaism," was co-sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, the non-governmental organization Future Through Language, and a local mosque. She emphasized America's "diplomacy of deeds" in education and medicine as well as lesser known areas. As an example of the latter, she mentioned the fact that the U.S. is the number one bilateral donor of food for the Palestinians.



Under Secretary Hughes joins conference participants at local mosque, June 14, 2007. [Erwin Giedenbacher, U.S. Embassy Vienna]



First Lady Laura Bush talks to Fulbright Scholars at Castel Schwerin in Germany, June 6, 2007. [White House photo by Shealah Craighead]

GERMANY: FIRST LADY MEETS FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

First Lady, and former teacher, Laura Bush chatted with Americans teaching in Germany when she met with eight American and German Fulbright scholars at the Castle Schwerin on June 6. The group included Fulbright teaching assistants at German high schools, who are participating in the U.S. Embassy's "MEET US" program; a Fulbright professor teaching Political Science at the University of Halle; and two young Germans of Turkish origin who took part in Fulbright-sponsored summer schools in the U.S. The First Lady was especially interested in learning about the experiences of the young American teachers at German high schools and the comparison of the German and American educational systems.

BOSNIA: STUDENTS CROSS ETHNIC LINES FOR SHARED VALUES

In a program organized by the U.S. non-governmental organization Civitas and funded by the Support for Eastern Europe Democracy School Connectivity Program, 80 students and teachers from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed to a joint multimedia presentation called "We are Bridges that Bring us Together." On June 8, both teachers and students demonstrated an increased tolerance of diversity and concluded that they had found a lot in common while they were exploring what they liked about their towns. All participants agreed to expand their project and organize at least one volunteer action in their home towns. The program will be offered to all 300 secondary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Students in Konjic, Bosnia hard at work on their shared values multi-media presentation, June 8, 2007. [Mak Radicic, Civitas Project Coordinator]

GEORGIA: U.S. AMBASSADOR AND TBILISI MAYOR WALK THROUGH HISTORY



Tbilisi Mayor, Gigi Ugulava, (center) explains the route to Ambassador John Tefft (left), June 2, 2007. [Gia Chkatarashvili, U.S. Embassy Tbilisi]

Tourists in Old Tbilisi will now be able to stroll through a new cultural route that opened on June 2, courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi. On hand for the opening of the Tbilisi Panoramic Cultural-Historic Route "Narikala" were U.S. Ambassador to Georgia John Tefft and Mayor Gigi Ugulava. The Narikala Route was created as a result of a project co-funded by the Ambassador's Cultural Heritage Preservation Fund, the Tbilisi Municipality and Ltd. Geographic. The route offers English-Georgian signs with information on the 19 important monuments located on the route and new lighting for touring the route. The project also will provide brochures, a website, guides, and maps of Old Tbilisi.

CZECH REPUBLIC: UNDER SECRETARY HUGHES WAGES PEACE

Bridging the cultural gap with America was the subject of a discussion between Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes, Czech women leaders, and participants of the U.S. Embassy in Prague's Junior Ambassadors Program on June 11. Pilsen Mayor Pavel Roedl and Governor Petr Zimmerman also joined the discussion and heard the students' ideas on how to strengthen the connection between America and other cultures. Hughes explained her strategy of "waging peace" to the key youth and women leaders and a larger audience of Czech opinion makers.



Under Secretary Hughes with Junior Ambassadors, June 11, 2007. [Alex McKnight, U.S. Embassy Prague]



ITALY: STUDENTS EDUCATED THROUGH MARSHALL PLAN ANNIVERSARY

The 60th anniversary of the Marshall Plan was celebrated in Rome by U.S. Ambassador to Italy Ronald Spogli and Italian Senator Giulio Andreotti and Under Secretary Enrico Letta, who spoke before 80 students. The U.S. Embassy in Rome prepared an exhibit showing the plan's impact in Italy and Europe, including a selection of historical documents, posters, and cartoons.

Above: Italian students look over Marshall Plan materials, May 30, 2007. [Maria Paola Pierini, U.S. Embassy Rome]

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM ENGAGES YOUTH

Charity can help bring people together. Volunteers, working through a civic education program of the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, have organized workshops for children with special needs, participated in environmental projects, and visited senior citizens as well as institutions for children with cerebral palsy. U.S. Embassy Sarajevo's Civitas Youth Network has sponsored six projects throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, through which food and school materials also were distributed.

Right: Civitas Youth Network volunteers participate in a visit to senior citizens, June 2007. [Ivana Kesic, Civitas Youth Coordinator]



BULGARIA: FIRST LADY OPENS AMERICAN CHILDREN'S CORNER



First Lady Laura Bush opened an American Children's Corner in the Sofia City Library, welcoming the fact that "Sofia children will be able to read the books which we have read to our children and which our parents read to us when we were children." In addition to the book collection, the Corner will feature six computers that patrons can use to learn more about America. It also will provide reference books that the U.S. Embassy in Sofia is donating to 100 public libraries throughout Bulgaria.

Left: First Lady Laura Bush engages Bulgarian youth at Sofia's American Corner, June 10, 2007. [White House photo]

TURKEY: BASKETBALL PROGRAM ENGAGES RURAL GIRLS' TEAMS

U.S. basketball players and coaches put on clinics for rural girls' teams in four cities during the week of June 11. The U.S. Embassy in Ankara hosted the program which was part of a partnership grant with the University of Delaware, the U.S. Embassy, and the Turkish Basketball Federation. The group presented balls and posters to about 70 girls in the first example of sports diplomacy in the Adana-Mersin region. The U.S. visitors successfully built bridges with Turkish youth as they discussed American higher education and the role of sports in U.S. society.



Right: A University of Delaware basketball player with members of a local girls team in Turkey, June 11, 2007. [Turkish Basketball Federation]

HUNGARY: CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP HELPS EMPOWER YOUNG WOMEN



The ability to think several moves ahead is a skill as valuable to a man as to a woman. U.S. Ambassador to Budapest April Foley visited a regional girls' chess tournament in Budapest on June 21 to praise the contestants' trailblazing in a game traditionally played by men. She told the 35 girls (ages 6-16)--from Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine, and United States--that chess helps develop skills such as concentration that are valuable beyond the chessboard. She also said that the camaraderie of these events helps ties of friendship.

Above: Ambassador Foley with contestants at a Budapest chess competition, June 21, 2007. [Attila Nemeth, U.S. Embassy Budapest]

SERBIA: 125 YEARS OF U.S.-SERBIAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

The U.S. Embassy in Belgrade highlighted the long history of U.S.-Serbian relations this year, starting with a month-long exhibit of photos and documents. Then Ambassador to Serbia Michael Polt, Harvard Club of Serbia President Mary Black, and the National Library Director opened the exhibit on May 29 and the following day had a frank and lively conference on the state of relations between the two countries. The exhibit also will travel to the seven American Corners in Serbia.

Right: Then-Ambassador and Mrs. Polt view the exhibition, titled "Looking Forward," May 2007. [©FoNet Wire Service]



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